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TELEGRAM

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R 311065Z DEC 75
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INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 KABUL 8458

LIMDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (CORRECT GARBLED PARAGRAPH 4, LINE THREE)

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, PINT, PGOV, AF
SUBJ: YEAR-END AFGHAN INTERNAL ASSESSMENT
1. SUMMARY: SINCE KABUL'S LAST INTERNAL ASSESSMENT (FEBRUARY 1975 - REFTEL) PRESIDENT MOHAMMAD DAUD HAS REINFORCED HIS PERSONAL HOLD ON THE POWER ELEMENTS AND INSTITUTIONS IN AFGHANISTAN BY BENCHING SOME OF THE NEW PLAYERS (WHOM MANY HERE CONSIDER LEFTISTS) WHO RODE TO POWER WITH HIM IN 1973, AND REPLACING THEM WITH TRUSTED "ESTABLISHMENT" ASSOCIATES FROM THE COUNTRY'S DOMINANT OLIGARCHY -- THE MOHAMMADZAI (DAUD'S OWN FAMILY) -- OR WITH NON-IDEOLOGICAL TECHNOCRATS. THUS DAUD NOW (JANUARY 1, 1976) HAS ENHANCED HIS ABILITY TO CARRY OUT WHAT HE
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PERCEIVES AS A NATIONALIST - PATRIOTIC - AFGHAN COURSE IN AFGHANISTAN'S INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT. HE MUST ALWAYS BE SENSITIVE TO SOME DEGREE TO LEFTISTS, PARTICULARLY AS THEY RELATE TO AFGHANISTAN'S BALANCING ACT VIS-A-VIS THE SOVIET UNION, AND ALSO TO RELIGIOUS ELEMENTS WHO STILL HAVE A STRONGHOLD ON THE AFGHAN MASSES. BUT BETWEEN THESE TWO HE HAS MORE ROOM FOR MANEUVER THAN HE HAD A YEAR AGO TO PURSUE HIS GOALS OF MODERNIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT.

2. IN MAKING THE SHIFT FROM LEFTISTS TO A MORE TRADITIONAL GOVERNING METHOD, DAOUD HAS IMPROVED HIS RELATIONS WITH ALL THE MOHAMMADZAI CLAN AND MOST ESPECIALLY WITH ABDUL WALI (DAOUD LET HIM OUT OF JAIL) WHOM SOME CONSIDER A LEADING POSSIBILITY TO REPLACE DAOUD WHEN HE LEAVES OFFICE.

3. THE ECONOMY HAS NOT BOUNDED FORWARD BUT ENOUGH HAS BEEN DONE TO GIVE MANY AFGHANS THE IMPRESSION THAT FOUNDATIONS ARE BEING LAID FOR ECONOMIC PROGRESS.

4. THE MAIN INTERNAL EVENT PREDICTED FOR 1976 IS A NEW CONSTITUTION, AND THE MAIN ISSUE IN THE CONSTITUTION IS THE SUCCESSION. THE PACE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL REFORM WILL ALSO AFFECT THE POLITICAL SCENE BECAUSE POPULAR EXPECTATIONS ARE SLOWLY RISING.

5. DAOUD'S INTERNAL POLICIES HAVE, WE BELIEVE, STRENGTHENED AFGHANISTAN'S INDEPENDENCE AND VIABILITY. FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE UNITED STATES THESE ARE THEREFORE HOPEFUL DEVELOPMENTS.

6. SEPTTEL ASSESSES AFGHAN FOREIGN RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

7. THE QUALITY AND PROCESSES OF AFGHAN POLITICS MAY NOT HAVE CHANGED GREATLY DURING 1975, BUT

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SOME OF THE SECOND-ECHELON PLAYERS DID. IN THIS SENSE 1975 MAY BE REMEMBERED AS THE YEAR OF "RETURN TO NORMALCY", OR AT LEAST A GOOD BEGINNING TOWARD THIS. THE NEW LINE-UP FOR THE GAME APPEARS TO BE THE OLDEST PLAYERS: AFGHANISTAN'S MOHAMMADZAI FAMILY AND ITS RELATED ESTABLISHMENT. THOSE WHO ARE, AT LEAST TEMPORARILY, SITTING ON THE BENCH CONSTITUTE "THE NEW CROWD OF MEN WHOSE IDEOLOGY WAS (OR WAS POPULARLY CONSIDERED TO BE) TOO FAR TO THE LEFT, TOO DANGEROUSLY CLOSE TO SOVIET POINTS OF VIEW. SOME MEMBERS OF THIS SQUAD, NOTABLY THE PAZHWAKS, WERE THEMSELVES CLOSE ASSOCIATES IN THE OLD PATTERNS OF FAMILY AND WEALTH. OTHERS WERE APPARENTLY MEN ON THE MAKE, OUTSIDERS TO ESTABLISHMENT PATTERNS WHOSE MAIN HOPE OF GAINING STATURE WAS THROUGH NEW STYLES OF POLITICS. A COMMON CHARACTERISTIC OF THIS "NEW CROWD" WAS WILLINGNESS TO SUBSCRIBE TO THE NOTION THAT IDEOLOGY SHOULD PLAY A ROLE IN THE GOVERNING OF THIS COUNTRY. THIS MADE THEM MAVERICKS IN THIS HARD SCRABBLE POLITICAL SCENE.

8. IN THE SAME CONNECTION IT IS WORTH NOTING THAT EVEN IN 1975 ONLY "SUPRA-AFGHAN" CONCERNS CAN SERVE BOOTSTRAP POLITICIANS IN THIS COUNTRY. FROM ONE SIDE ONE MAY CALL UPON (IN AN IDEOLOGICAL SENSE) THE POWER AND MIGHT OF SOVIET RUSSIA AND THE COMMUNIST WORLD, BUTTRESSED BY VAGUE NOTIONS OF NON-ALIGNED SOLIDARITY AND MUSLIM SOCIALISM, AND THEREBY GAIN A CERTAIN LEGITIMACY IN AFGHAN POLITICS WHICH "THE SYSTEM" ITSELF WOULD NEVER CONFER. FROM THE OTHER SIDE ONE MAY CALL IN THE POWER AND MIGHT OF ISLAM, RADIATING VAGUELY FROM JIDDA ON WAVES OF HISTORY AND ORTHODOXY (AND MOST RECENTLY, MONEY) AND CONFERRING CONSIDERABLE CLOUT ON THE POLITICAL FIGURE WHO CAN PLAY THIS GAME CONVINCINGLY.

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9. FOR THE AFGHAN WHO PLAYS ONLY WITH THE COUNTERS AVAILABLE WITHIN AFGHANISTA ITSELF, THERE IS LITTLE TO BE USED OUTSIDE THE CLAIMS OF FAMILY AND MONEY: THERE ARE NOT LABOR UNIONS OVER WHICH TO GAIN CONTROL, NO GREAT BUSINESSES FROM WHOSE MONEYED SECURITY ONE MAY BULLY GOVERNMENT, NO PRESS WITH WHICH TO SMITE PRESENT RULERS, NO INTELLECTUAL ESTABLISHMENT IN WHICH TO FIND REFUGE AND FROM WHICH TO SHOOT ROCKETS OF DISDAIN, NO CLOSELY KNIT NETWORK OF COMMERCIAL INTERESTS CAPABLE OF PERSUADING GOVERNMENT TO A PARTICULAR COURSE OF ACTION, AND NO PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS DETERMINED TO OBTAIN LARGER SLICES OF THE NATIONAL PIE FOR DOCTORS OR LAWYERS OR TEACHERS OR WHAT HAVE YOU. AFGHANISTAN IS SINGULARLY BEREFT OF MODERN POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS.

10. IN AFGHANISTA THEN, ONE MAY TAKE ONE OF THREE ROADS TO POLITICAL ACTIVITY: THE LEFTISH ROAD, THE RELIGIOUS ROAD, OR THE "ESTABLISHMENT" ROAD, THE LAST WHILE CONFERRING GREATEST SAFETY

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ALSO OFFERING LEAST MOBILITY. A LAST, POSSIBLE ROAD TO POLITICAL POWER IN AFGHANISTAN IS THE ONE USED IN 1973 BY DAOUD HIMSELF, NAMELY A MILITARY COUP. OUR ASSESSMENT IS THAT DURING 1975 DAOUD STRENGTHENED HIS CONTROL OVER THE AFGHAN MILITARY THROUGH PERSONNEL CHANGES WHICH MOVED POSSIBLY DISAFFECTED OFFICERS OUT OF THE KABUL AREA AND STRENGTHENED PROFESSIONALISM IN THE ARMED FORCES. ONE CAN NEVER BE SURE IN A COUNTRY LIKE THIS WHEN A YOUNG OFFICER WILL ATTEMPT A POWER GRAB BUT IT SEEMS UNLIKELY AS OF THIS WRITING.

11. DAOUD HAS THIS YEAR BEEN STEADFAST AND ARTICULATE IN RECOMMENDING ADHERENCE TO THE "AFGHAN WAY" OF POLITICS, CLEAN AS A HOUND'S TOOTH OF FOREIGN IDEOLOGY, TRADITIONAL, FAMILY OR TRIBAL - ORIENTED, MOHAMMADZAI DIRECTED.

HIS SPEECHES IN HERAT AND KANDAHAR (KABUL 1835 AND 2834 -- 1975) WERE PARTICULARLY EXPRESSIVE STATEMENTS OF THIS VIEW.

ALTHOUGH WITHOUT DOUBT A DEVOTED MUSLIM, DAOUD HAS READILY MOVED AHEAD THIS YEAR WHERE ISLAM MIGHT INTERFERE WITH DEVELOPMENT. THIS READINESS HAS BEEN MOST VISIBLE IN THE FIELD OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS.

12. DAOUD'S ACTIONS HAVE SPOKEN EVEN LOUDER THAN HIS WORDS. HE WAS UNDERSTANDABLY VIGOROUS IN PUTTING DOWN THE PANJSHIR INSURGENCIES DURING JULY, BUT WHAT WENT ALMOST UNNOTICED IN THE EXCITEMENT OF ALLEGED PAKISTANI INVOLVEMENT WAS THE FACT THAT DAOUD WAS PUTTING DOWN A MANIFESTATION OF "INTERNATIONAL" ISLAM. AFGHAN NATIONALS WHO WERE RINGLEADERS IN THE INSURGENCY, IN ADDITION TO BEING PERSONS ALLEGEDLY SUBVERTED BY PAKISTANI AIMS, WERE REPORTEDLY MEMBERS OF "IKHWAN-AL-MULEMIN", THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD, AND IT WAS THE BROTHERHOOD AS PART OF A LARGER GROUP WHICH WAS SAID TO HAVE ENTERED AN AGREE-

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MENT WITH PAKISTAN'S CHIEF OF INTELLIGENCE, GENERAL JAILANI.

13. A FAR BROADER TARGET, AND ONE NOT CIRCUMSCRIBED BY THE RESTRAINTS OF PIETY AND TRADITION, WAS THE AFGHAN "LEFT". DAOUD'S WING CLIPPING OF THIS GROUP LATE IN THE YEAR WAS PROPORTIONALLY MORE DRAMATIC. HE FIRED ONE CABINET MINISTER AND DEMOTED ANOTHER, AND HIS BLOODLESS PURGE CONTINUED INTO AFGHANISTAN'S MILITARY FORCES AND ITS BUREAUCRACY. IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO KNOW HOW MANY PERSONS CAUGHT IN THIS "PURGE" WERE IN FACT LEFTISTS IN THE SENSE THAT THEIR PRIMARY LOYALTY WAS TO THE SOVIET UNION, HOW MANY WERE PERSONS WHO ADVOCATED SOME KIND OF AFGHAN SOCIALISM, HOW MANY WERE SIMPLY MAVERICKS WHO HAD COMMITTED AT SOME POINT SOME ACT WHICH CREATED DOUBT REGARDING THEIR ADHERENCE TO "ESTABLISHMENT WAYS", AND HOW MANY WERE MERELY PROTEGES OF OUTGOING BOSSES WHO, IN WHAT APPEARS FAIRLY WIDELY REGARDED AS AFGHAN BUREAUCRATIC TRADITION, HAS TO BE SACRIFICED IN THE BRINGING IN OF NEW BOSSES WHO HAVE THEIR OWN RELATIVES AND FRIENDS.

14. ACCOMPANYING THESE CHANGES WERE SUCH VIVID RUMORS OF "ABOLITION" OF THE SHADOWY, LEFTIST ORIENTED "CENTRAL COMMITTEE", WHICH CAME TO POWER WITH DAOUD, THE THE EMBASSY FINALLY CONCLUDED THAT THE BODY HAD COME TO HAVE LITTLE IN EFFECT BESIDES CEREMONIAL POWER. YET THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE WAS NOT "ABOLISHED" IN ANY DECLARED, FORMAL SENSE, AND IN FACT THREE OF ITS MEMBERS WERE RESURRECTED AND SENT FORTH DURING THE PODGORNÝ VISIT. WEEKS PASS WITHOUT ONE'S HEARING A WHISPER OF CENTRAL COMMITTEE ACTIVITY, FOLLOWED BY A DAY (AS HAPPENDED DECEMBER 15, 1975) WHEN THE COMMITTEE IS MENTIONED THREE TIMES ON PAGE ONE OF A LEADING NEWSPAPER. DESPITE THIS AMBIGUOUS AND UNTIDY SITUATION THE EMBASSY CONCLUDES, ALONG WITH MANY POLITICALLY AWARE AFGHANS, THAT THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE HAS LOST PRIORITY IN CLAIMING

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DAQUD'S ATTENTION.

15. ALONG WITH MOVES AGAINST RIGHT AND LEFT
DAQUD FURTHER COMMITTED HIMSELF TO HIS "AFGHAN
ESTABLISHMENT". MOST NOTABLY HE CAUSE PUBLIC
EXONERATION (OF UNPUBLICIZED CHARGES) BY A

*Text incomplete
in Jaws*

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